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REFORMER

believed the general to be sincerely Republican
only wished
Mm to relieve them of certain men of the hour,
such, as
President GreVy, for rumours were already
abroad respecting
the nefarious practices of the latter's son-in-law,
M. Wilson.
But others were intent on purposes of their
own, the overthrow of the Republic and the establishment of
a monarchy or a dictatorship, into which enterprise they
hoped to
inveigle the popular ex-Minister of War.
Briefly, at this time a great crisis was gradually approaching.

Nevertheless, though the unrest penetrated to the literary world, the latter did not neglect the subjects which more particularly concerned it, and there was some commotion among men of letters when on August 18 that year (1887) " Le Figaro" published a manifesto directed against Zola's new work, which had been appearing in the " Gil Bias" since May, and the concluding pages of which were at that very moment being written at Me"dan. This manifesto (which, when one recalls the presumptuous preface to " Les Soirees de Me*dan," may be regarded as a Roland for an Oliver) was signed by five young writers, Paul Bonnetain, J. H. Rosny, Lucien Descaves, Paul Margueritte, and Gustave Guiches, who, " in the name of their supreme respect for art, protested against a literature devoid of all nobility." The

factum was of some length, diffuse, bristling with scientific jargon, and disfigured by a ridiculous attack on the personal appearance of Zola, whose leadership these young men solemnly renounced.

At that time the best known of the five was Paul Bonnetain, a Provencal of Mmes, and a friend of Alphonse Daudet, who came from the same city. Bonnetain had then published four or five books, the first of which, " Chariot